Why the West Fears Islam: An Exploration of Muslims in Liberal Democracies
By Jocelyne Cesari

Towards a Postsecular International Politics: New Forms of Community, Identity, and Power
Edited by Luca Mavelli and Fabio Petito

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Chapter 6

Postsecularity and the Contending Visions of the European Political Imagination in International Relations

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We are bound to the past in the intellectual order as in every other, and if were to forget that we are animals which are specifically political, we should be surprised to discover how historically we think, how traditional we are, even when we are claiming to make all things new. It is then, right that we should go some distance into the past in our search for the roots and first germinative principle of the ideas that rule the world today. It is when an idea appears above ground, when it is big with the future, that it has the greatest interest for us and we can best grasp its real significance.

—Jacques Maritain[1]

How to draw on a great past without smothering change? How to change without losing one's roots? Above all, what to do with the stranger in one's midst—with men excluded in a traditionally aristocratic society, with thoughts denied expression by a traditional culture, with needs not articulated in conventional religion, with the utter foreigner from across the frontier. These are the problems which every civilized society has had to face.

—Peter Brown[2]

Introduction

The worst global economic crisis since the Great Depression has made it clear that the identity of Europe, what *is* Europe, and what is Europe *for* are questions central to the meaning and to the future of the European project and to the future of European security in the twenty-first century. The European Union (EU) project in its most recent form has been sold in various referenda to European publics as a bourgeois, technocratic project to guarantee employment and prosperity for Europeans. The recent failure or unraveling of these objectives undermines for many, if not most, Europeans what is Europe—indeed, what is it now for, if it can no longer guarantee the continuation of these bourgeois objectives? When economic difficulties arose, it became clear that French, British, or German workers are, well, French, British, and German workers after all, and not "European workers" welcome in Europe to work anywhere. Beyond the bickering of France and Germany, or France and the United Kingdom (depending on which national newspapers one reads), at the root of the debate over EU bailout funds to Greece and to other countries is not the details of economic or technocratic disagreements, but the identity of Europe and the nature of the bond between European states, and the conception of rights and duties between them. This is what makes the EU more than a (regional) states-system, and what the English School would recognize as a (regional) type of the society of states or international society.

In other words, the identity of Europe, the meaning of Europe, the role of culture and religion in Europe, what binds Europeans together, and the sources of this identity and meaning are not dusty, historical questions about origins, regarding the remote past. They are questions central to understanding the dynamics of the multiple crises facing the contemporary European project—debt, unemployment, democracy, immigration, and how the sense of collective identity, meaning, and responsibility is now interpreted. Issues that were once managed (or would it be better to say contained, controlled, or even mismanaged?) with discourses concerning "minority rights"—racism, ethnic discrimination, and so on—now increasingly, and for most Europeans, uncomfortably, have a cultural and religious dimension to them.

Multifaith or multireligious relations are complicated by what immigration has wrought—the globalization of cultural and religious pluralism, *local* communities that are also part of *global* religious

diaspora communities. In other words, a variety of social issues in Europe is causing a rethink of secularism in the West through several issues and questions, such as the veil, religious symbols, marriage, honor killing, refugee status, women's rights, rights to apostasy or to religious conversion, support for terrorism, the boundaries of the sacred and the secular, religion as set of private beliefs versus a social conception of religion as a more public ensemble of rituals and practices, and the role of faith and reason in democracy.[3] Religion is upsetting what many secular Europeans took for granted as the basis of political order in the European Union.

Moreover, it is not only the way globalization has contributed to a more pluralistic Europe that has contributed to the current crisis in European identity and security. The end of the Cold War and the fall of the communist states-system have led to the emergence of not only a more united Europe, but also a more *diverse* Europe since 1989. The political structures of the continent now include within its geographic sweep Western and Eastern Christian churches, which divided by tradition and modern history find their relationship a key marker in the contemporary religious identity of Europe. It is in this changing cultural and political reality that the Vatican's thinking about the "idea of Europe" and European unity since Pius XII, and especially for John Paul II and Benedict XVI, is relevant to debates over European identity and security.[4] Papal thought has helped give form to the Vatican's attitude towards Turkey and, more recently, to the idea of Islam *as part of* an emerging Europe.

Culture, Religion, the Postsecular, and International Society

This is why any analysis of the concept of the postsecular and its relevance to the study of European politics or international relations should be situated within the dynamics of culture, religion, and history. Cultural and religious change is the main way the debate about the postsecular enters the study of international relations. For the most basic understanding of the binary formulation of the secular/postsecular is about the dynamics of social and cultural change in domestic society, and how this is related to social change in international society. If scholars were initially taken by surprise by the global resurgence of religion in international relations, and were unsure about how to examine it, one of the reasons may be that the dynamics of cultural and religious change were not as prominent a

feature as they should have been in the study of international relations or in the study of change in international relations.[5] In other words, this is another way religion was marginalized in the study of international relations. Scholars were more interested in *political* change, and not how social, cultural, or religious change may influence political change.[6]

One of the main debates regarding the postsecular is the extent to which it is not a linear concept, for the secular overlaps with the postsecular, and it remains a part of the postsecular. It is not an overcoming of modernity (which was the mistake of modernization theory), but it is a new type of social and religious configuration. In fact, an overlap of this kind is not really new; it is an *inevitable* part of the dynamics of culture, religion, and social change in history. This is why it is useful for understanding the relationship between the secular and postsecular in international relations to examine the *original* cultural and religious change in Europe—the "Christianization" of Europe, the transition in late antiquity from paganism to Christianity.

There are two reasons why this original religious transition is important for understanding the secular/postsecular binary in European politics and international relations. The first is that the Christianization of the Roman world "lies at the root of much of the culture and religion of modern Europe."[7] The construction of the set of binaries—pagan/Christian and the secular/postsecular—remains central today for understanding Europe and for understanding Europe in relation to the rest of the world.[8] The identity of Europe—what first became "Christendom"—was constructed in relation to the cultural and religious pluralism of the many peoples that inhabited the European continent—the Jews, the Greeks, the Romans, the German barbarians. Globalization has made the question of cultural and religious pluralism an inevitable part of living in the modern world. Therefore, understanding social and cultural change (the pagan/Christian transition or the secular/postsecular one) cannot avoid the way ideas, beliefs, and values are a part of the dynamics of power and authority, and the dynamics of the balance of power in international relations.[9]

The second reason is in relation to the theory of international relations. The impact of living in a global world has complicated the problem of the levels of analysis. This is the problem of "how to identify and treat different types of location"—most notably, the international system, the state, society, and individual levels of analysis, "in

which the *sources* of explanation for *observed* phenomena can be found" (emphasis added).[10] Theory has subsequently tried to refine the concepts used in the levels of analysis—such as the units, process, system structure, and interaction capacity (i.e., the level of transportation, communications, and organizational capability in the system). The utility of this framework can be questioned for globalization since the real question is not whether the levels "are distinct but how to study their unmistakable interaction."[11] Therefore, what is missing is a more comprehensive account of how the *dynamics* of culture and religion fit into the levels of analysis and the relations between them (i.e., the dynamics of both culture and religion taken together, rather than fitting "religion" under a vague category called "culture").[12]

It is for these reasons that the historical question asked about the rise of "ancient Christianity," the concept Peter Brown invented to describe late Roman antiquity, is remarkably similar to the kind of questions now asked about the "religious turn" in the study of politics and international relations.[13] "What difference did Christianity make (in late antiquity)?"[14] "What difference does religion make?" "When and how does religion matter in international relations?"[15] The idea that these are, or even may be, unrelated questions is to make, as this section seeks to demonstrate, what are increasingly untenable assumptions, given how the key *concepts*—culture, religion, the state, the secular, and the political, and the *boundaries* between them are mutually constitutive in politics and international relations.

What do we learn from the pagan/Christian transition about the dynamics of social and cultural change? Is it that the pagan/Christian and the secular/postsecular shifts are part of a similar type of social dynamic? Accounts of the Christianization of the Roman world then (like accounts of the postsecular now) are misleading if they speak of the process as a linear, comprehensive description that seems to imply a single all-embracing explanation.[16] Brown's formulation of the problem for ancient Christianity is reflected in the interrogation of the secular/postsecular distinction. There was, he argues, "the weight of the pagan past *within* the Christian present" (emphasis added).[17] It is the weight of the secular past *within* the postsecular present that the concept of the postsecular is trying to grapple with. The way religion and secularism are *intertwined* in the modern period indicates a *codependency* between secular and religious discourses rather than the binary opposition between the religious and the secular that is central to theories of secularization and modernization.[18]

It should be unsurprising that there is no sharp discontinuity between the secular and postsecular worlds any more than there was between the pagan and Christian worlds. This is not how social and cultural change happens. It is to make quite an ahistorical distinction.[19] However it *is* the kind of distinction useful (then as well as now) to those who have the power, authority, knowledge, and the interest in *portraying* the cultural, religious, and social change of their era in this (triumphal) manner. In other words, it is a very old, unavoidable problem to critically investigate how *power*—politics, authority, and belief—ideology, coercion, and calculation relate to the very *construction* of social categories—culture, religion, the state, the political, and the secular—and to *the politics of the construction of the boundaries between them*. Thus, it is the social, cultural, and political dynamics of the time and space *within* the transition that is crucial for understanding the relationship between culture and religion, and how this relationship is central to understanding their influence in politics and international relations.[20]

Christ's supernatural defeat in the heaven of the god(s) in late antiquity may have been all well and good, but back on earth life was still messy and confusing (as it still is). Paganism was supernaturally defeated, pagan worship could be abolished, but how much paganism lived on in "culture"—broadly defined for the moment as everyday habits, rituals, practices, and ways of doing things. "How tightly was Christianity bound to particular cultural forms?"[21] How much were they "culture," and how much were everyday habits and practices associated with the pagan gods; and *how do you tell the difference*, and *who* decides *what* those differences are (the problem of authority, legitimacy, and coercion), and *how* significant were such differences for taking Christianity seriously, for living faithfully, or for an authentic Christian life? (This is the problem of believers of all stripes today who also may not want to recognize that within any religious tradition the answers to these questions *can* change as societies change.)[22] Now, questions like these, Brown points out, were most acute at times of rapid or profound cultural change, that is, at times when the society *encounters* foreign cultures, such as the initial Christian encounter with the classical tradition of Greece and Rome (Tertullian's famous question, "What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?"), and later on with the encounters crucial to the construction of European unity, and the definition of Western Christianity—the Germanic tribes and the barbarian invasions, Islam and the Arab conquest of the East, the Vikings in the North.[23]

Later on this process continued when Europe during the "age of discovery" encountered the Ottoman Empire and the peoples of South America.[24]

The way for modern scholars to answer these kind of questions about culture, religion, authenticity, and faithfulness was often to distinguish between what was "religion" and what it was not, and to provisionally call "culture" all the other set of activities. Robert Markus adopts Clifford Geertz's famous definition of "religion as a cultural system," and argues that religion is "an historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in *symbols*, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in *symbolic forms* by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes toward life" (emphasis added).[25] Markus wanted to distinguish between "religion" and other *constituent* elements of "culture." How did (late Roman) Christians, lay and clerical, draw the lines that distinguished their "religious" from their "secular" lives and experiences (i.e., "culture")?[26] What was the difference between ancient idolatry, paganism, and social practices, and traditional customs that were "simply their way of doing things"?[27]

However, it is difficult to apply these distinctions. It was not any easier, Markus emphasizes, to do so in the ancient world than it is today for religious believers themselves, nor for religious leaders, journalists, educators, historians, or social scientists. In fact, Markus argues that ancient Christianity did not develop its own way of doing *everything* nor today would there be an Islamic or Christian way of doing everything.

It can be asked if Christians in late antiquity, or for that matter, Muslims, Christians, or *anyone* today who takes religion seriously, would distinguish between the *constituent* elements of culture and religion in this (modern) way, that is, in a way that is a product of secular modernity? It is unlikely. The reason is that what a wide variety of disciplines—theology, religious studies, and the sociology and anthropology of religion—increasingly recognize is that what *constitutes* the concepts or categories—culture, religion, the secular, and the political (or any other areas of social life or human activity)—cannot be (or can no longer be) adopted as concepts that are abstract, universal, and timeless. There is no universal, transcultural, transhistorical definition of "religion" or the "religious" (which can be distinguished from the "secular") applicable through some Archimedean point to past societies (like ancient Christianity) or to contemporary ones.

Rather, they are social constructs, "situational or relational categories, with mobile boundaries which shift according to the maps employed. There is nothing sacred in itself, only things sacred *in relation*" (emphasis added).[28] So *who* draws the conceptual maps, and in *whose* interests are they drawn? *Power* then or now cannot be separated from the dynamics of culture, religion, and social change in domestic politics or international relations. This is not, or not mainly, the common story (critical theory, Marxist, or neo-Marxist) about how (unscrupulous) states, politicians, or political elites "manipulate" something called "religion" through political or economic power or through cultural hegemony and ideology (as Antonio Gramsci perceptively discussed) for their own nefarious purposes.[29] This reduces religion to being epiphenomenal in social theory and political or economic analysis. William Cavanaugh has clearly shown that the *politics* of authority, reason, discipline, coercion, and calculation needs to be a part of any analysis of *what configurations of power* authorize the way the categories *themselves*—culture, religion, the state, the secular, and the political—and the *boundaries* between them are *mutually constitutive* in domestic society and in international society.[30]

The constituent "elements" that make up culture and religion are not an open menu of choice; they are historically specific. The idea that there *can* be a definition of religion or some autonomous essence of religion (separate from the alleged autonomous essence of law, politics, economics, or any other human activity) that can be value-free, trans-historical, and trans-cultural is *itself* a historical product of specific discursive processes, those of the modern West (or Western Europe).[31] Therefore, attempts to make such separations are prone to essentialism and anachronism. The modern concept of religion, and the *politics* surrounding its definition, as the next section shows, was only invented after the (so-called) wars of religion in early modern Europe. This modern invention of religion remains one of the main aspects of the European (secular) political imagination.

Postsecularity and the Crisis of European Political Imagination

The concept of postsecularity has gained increasing saliency and relevance in international relations. Why is it happening *now*, at this time in global politics and history (and not some *other* time)? At almost any time a coherent picture of the surface stream of events

can be given—wars, civil wars, revolutions, the rise and fall of governments—and on each of these events is the impact of the variety of technological processes now called globalization.

However, why concepts emerge, how they are developed and the saliency they gain (for good or for ill) in scholarly or public discourse, and even *why* funding bodies, especially government ones, should decide to investigate them happens in a *specific* context of society, culture, politics, and economics. This is why it is not possible to properly understand the concept of the "postsecular" and its relevance to the study of contemporary Europe, or the study of international relations, without recognizing it has arisen within a specific *cultural* dynamic—the erosion of the (Western or European) cultural foundations of global order.

Indeed, the impact or even the relevance of culture and religion (and so any discussion of the secular or the religious) to global order is still contested. The previous section examined how culture and religion were marginalized in the understanding of social change and political change in international relations. They are still marginalized in widely influential accounts of US efforts to build a postwar liberal international order. If the liberal order is *not* disintegrating, it is argued, it simply needs better "governance" and a new global bargain to restore leadership—American leadership, of course, although this does seem to be more a view from within the United States than outside it.[32] However, if the (Western established) liberal order *is* disintegrating, with new states, new (non-Western) powers, new power centers, not fully embedded in the liberal international order (e.g., China, Russia), and so with new values, interests, perspectives, and approaches, it can be asked: what *binds* together a more culturally and religiously pluralistic global system, with new agendas, new interests, and new perspectives for organizing global order?[33] It can be argued there may be a growing role for religious actors, cultural diplomacy, and interreligious dialogue in articulating the basis for a pluralistic and balanced European order as well as global order. Indeed, it may be that the EU's ability to engage more constructively with religious actors in a newly emerging pluralistic Europe offers the best way for the EU to engage more effectively with the emerging more culturally and religiously pluralistic international order.

In fact, the contention that the rise of postsecular discourse has accompanied the erosion of the (Western or European) cultural foundations of global order should not be so surprising an observation. Where did modernity, where did the secular, come from? What

did it *mean* to be modern, and *who* decided what this meaning was? It was actually Europeans of course (and not the peoples in the offshoots of European civilization—the United States, South Africa, Australia, or New Zealand). Modernity emerged as a single condition defined by European civilization. The main concepts—religion, the world religions, the sacred, the secular, modernity, and modernization—emerged in the early sociology of religion not only as a way of *interpreting* European modernization and industrialization (as the story is conventionally told regarding the founding fathers of sociology who examined the original transition from peasant societies to capitalism, industrialization, and modernization).[34]

The main concepts of the sociology of religion *also* emerged during the unique conditions the European middle classes enjoyed—what Tuchman called the "proud tower," erected on the security, comfort, and hegemony of the European balance of power, which created a civilization with such immense self-confidence and self-satisfaction, as if the ability to improve material technique or technology is or should be the basis for global cultural, political, and even spiritual primacy (roughly 1815–1914).[35] It all seems rather heroic now, as well as ethno-centric, to assume that the experience of a tiny, white, minority of Christians (or Europeans), as important as this has been for world civilization, can provide the basis for the general principles, ideal types, pattern variables, and so on to describe the future experience of the entire world, the shift from traditional society to modern society.[36] The course of civilization was set, in which no backsliding was possible—progress, positivism, and social evolution was expected in a wide variety of areas of life, inevitably from lower to higher forms of organization, including international relations.[37] This background, of course, was also applied to the study of culture and religion—beliefs, conduct, and institutions in which the higher form (monotheism, the modern state) were assumed to come later than the lower forms (pantheism, polytheism, tribes, city-states, etc.).[38]

Where does the contemporary (secular) European political imagination come from, what are its sources, and how has this helped construct the concept of "the secular" in international relations? There are at least two significant sources. The first source of the European political imagination is the "political mythology of liberalism," that is, the way most Europeans still think about religion and the mixing of religion and politics. It goes back to the wars of religion in early modern Europe based on a highly selective reading of religion,

secularism, and conflict, and how this informs the European political imagination in ways that have implications for European approaches to global politics and international security. What the wars of religion (seemingly) indicated is that when religion is brought into public life, into domestic or international politics, it causes intolerance and the potential for modern wars of religion or clashes between civilizations. Therefore, the state, religious privatization (i.e., religion restricted to personal life), and political secularization (i.e., the separation of religion and politics) are needed for domestic stability and international order. Moreover, Cavanaugh has shown the modern concept of religion was *integrally* a part of the way state-building elites, and their propagandists—Bodin, Locke, and Hobbes—*constructed* the modern concept of the state, legitimating the "migration of the holy" from the church to the state.[39]

The political mythology of liberalism is about the European ideas regarding what constitutes "religion" and the norms regarding the mixing of religion and politics. Casanova has rightly argued they have a mythic quality, as well as constitutive function in the construction of European identity for this is what informs the European political imagination regarding religion, European security, and international relations.[40]

The second source of the European political imagination is the European experience of modernization and development. The moral and political story here is that secularization—the separation of religion from politics, from public life, so religion loses political and social significance, even though it may be a part of private life—is considered to be an inevitable part of modernization and economic development. The reemergence of religion in politics, the public sphere, could be dismissed as outcrops of "fundamentalism" among social groups or societies that had not sufficiently modernized. In other words, fundamentalism offered an explanation for the persistence of religion in the modern world or global secular cosmopolitan modernity (indeed, fundamentalism was first defined as part of a revolt against the modern world).

However, it is now more widely acknowledged how Euro-centric this legacy is, and how rooted the concept of religion is in the European experience of modernization, colonialism, and imperialism. Many Europeans—even those willing to shed Euro-centricism and engage with cultural diversity—*still* seem to expect the model of religion and secularization *in Europe* to be the model for the entire world. In the study of theology and religious studies, compared to

the study of international relations, there is a greater recognition that the *concept* of religion—as a set of ideas, beliefs, doctrines, and the *boundaries* of what is called the sacred and the secular—as well as the concept of the "world religions," were Western or European in origin, invented and constructed to facilitate colonial rule.[41] The origin of many of the core concepts in the sociology of religion emerged out of the European experience of modernization, which was driven as much by science and state expansion as by religious convictions. They are now being *reconstructed* as global concepts, adapted from the cultural and religious experience of religiosity *and* modernization in the global South that is transforming the sociology of religion.[42] There is now a growing recognition that there are multiple, non-Western ways of being modern in the twenty-first century.[43] Europeans need to rethink their understanding of religion given the religious world of the global South.

Thus, the rise of the postsecular indicates the end of the secular narrative of modernity. What is replacing the European vision is the transition to a variety of cultural and religious narratives of modernity—a recognition that we now live with the rise of the religious world of the global South, with multiple ways of being modern that do not reflect the European experience of modernization and development.

"Europe's World" or the Religious World of the Global South

What does the postsecular have to do with that the rise of the global South, that is, the rise of new powers—the BRIC or BASIC countries—Brazil, South Africa, India, and China, and so on? This geopolitical transformation is often considered to be to one of the defining characteristics of international relations in the twenty-first century. The answer is that this geopolitical transformation is also the rise of the religious world of the global South. The saliency of religion is occurring in countries with a wide variety of religious traditions, which are also at different levels of economic development. It is not driven, or is not primarily driven, by poverty or social exclusion (mega-cities, mega-churches, and educated, middle class lifestyles from Sao Paulo, to Lagos, to Seoul, to Jakarta all seem to go together). It is also more broadly based than what is called religious fundamentalism, which briefly can be defined as the strict, rigid adherence to a set of rituals, doctrines, and practices.[44]

The religious world of the global South is being reinforced by the global politics of religious demography. The future global religious landscape is characterized by the massive, general demographic shift in population from the developed countries in the North with their declining or stagnating populations—Western Europe (more so than North America), the lands of the former Soviet Union, to the booming populations of the developing countries (the story is complicated by falling fertility in Japan and China).[45] The North accounted for 32 percent of the world's population in 1900, 29 percent in 1950, 25 percent in 1970, about 18 percent in 2000, and it is estimated that the North will account for only 10–12 percent of the world's population in 2050. The term "global South" reflects this demographic reality of international relations.

The Pew Foundation report titled "Global Christianity: A Report on the Size and Distribution of the World's Christian Population" in 2011 assessed that there are some 2.18 billion Christians, representing nearly a third of the estimated 2010 global population of 6.9 billion. Christians are to be found across the globe, which today means that no single region can indisputably claim to be the center of global Christianity; which is *not* the case for other religious traditions. This is in contrast to the past when Europe held that position, for example, in 1910 about two-thirds of the world's Christians lived within the continent. Today, however, approximately one-quarter of all Christians live in Europe (26 percent), the Americas (37 percent), in sub-Saharan Africa (24 percent), and in Asia and the Pacific (13 percent). The report noted extraordinary changes in the global configuration of Christianity—in sub-Saharan Africa a 60-fold increase, from fewer than 9 million in 1910 to more than 516 million in 2010; and in the Asia-Pacific region, a 10-fold increase, from about 28 million in 1910 to more than 285 million in 2010.[46] In China today it is estimated that up to 10 percent of the population is Christian, which is set to increase dramatically, making this country in due course the one with the largest concentration of Christians in the world, outstripping the United States.[47]

What is driving this demographic shift to the global South? One of the most important reasons is religious demography, that is, how faith influences lifestyle, and when religion is believed, when its values, beliefs, rituals, and so on are practiced. Theology has emerged as one of the most accurate indicators of fertility, far better than religious, denominational, or ethnic identities. Why? More devout families, Jews, Muslims, and Christians, believe

children are a blessing from God, and so they have more of them than their secular counterparts. What does this means for the politics in the secular, liberal West—especially for Europe? It is that its population, and especially with its immigrants from the global South (Christian, it should be emphasized, as well as Muslim, although this is less visible in the public or secular consciousness), may be *more* religious at the end of the twenty-first century than it was at the beginning.[48]

Thus, religion, contrary to European expectations, given the experience of religion and modernization in most countries, will increasingly be a part of the politics of the global South as well as European politics and society.[49] The concept of the postsecular emerges out of profound anxieties over the role of culture and religion in (Western) European identity and imagination (how what used to be called Eastern Europe fits this picture is more complicated).[50] The concept in many ways is an attempt to grapple with the fact that the world is no longer a world of Europe's making.[51] It is not the kind of world most Europeans expected to be living in at the beginning of the twenty-first century. It is a world that increasingly reflects the religious values, beliefs, and concepts of the global South.

The crux of Peter Berger's argument touches on the relevance of the debate on the postsecular given the religious world of the global South and the EU's eastward extension. The "turn to the postsecular," Berger argues, indicates for Habermas a positive view of religion, or at least a positive view of Judaism and Christianity, but "for quite utilitarian reasons: religion, whether true or not, is socially useful."[52] However, "any sociologist will agree that religion, true or not, is useful for the solidarity and moral consensus of society. The problem is that this utility depends on at least some people actually believing that there is the supernatural reality that religion affirms. The utility ceases when nobody believes this anymore."[53] Religion always has been an important part of the way people in the global South interpret their personal lives and social world. So how the social world is interpreted is a complex part of their theology, spirituality, conceptions of piety, faithfulness, and understanding of the nature of God and the presence of God in the world. This is what will shape their worldview and inform their struggles for dignity, democracy, social justice, and economic development, as they seek to live faithfully amid the problems of world poverty, climate change, conflict, and development in the twenty-first century.[54]

European Identity, the Postsecular, Eastern Christianity, and European Security

However, Europe is not only living in a new dynamic geopolitical context because of the rise of the global South, with the religious rise of the rest (having a transnational impact in Europe on security, migration, immigration, and multifaith relations). Europe is also now living is a new dynamic institutional context, in which what *constitutes* "Europe" or the European Union is now moving *eastwards* (incorporating states and cultures rooted in Eastern Christianity).[55] The possible utility of the concept of the postsecular, in so far as it has mainly has been articulated by Western intellectuals (and so in some sense rooted in the culture and religion of European Catholicism and Protestantism), will need to engage with the new Europe and this means engaging with Eastern Christianity.

Thus, both geographic shifts in culture and power incorporate different streams of religious concepts, history, and understandings of the "political" that have either emerged out of communist Europe or the frontier contexts of North Africa, the Mediterranean, and the Middle East. In fact Eastern Christianity is especially concentrated in Eastern Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean,[56] although the Oriental Orthodox tradition (Coptic, Armenian, and Syriac) are dominant in the Middle East.[57] Eastern Christianity brings competing discourses *within* an expanding Europe, and new perspectives on church and state, and on how the secular, the religious, relate to the political *within* Europe.[58] This has created an entirely different context of politics, theology, and history from which to interrogate the postsecular, and what it means or might mean for European politics, security, and the study of international relations.[59]

Eastern Christianity has about 260 million members worldwide, although estimates can vary, which makes it the third largest Christian denomination with approximately 12 percent of the global Christian population.[60] Approximately a hundred million Orthodox Christians live in the countries of the former Soviet Union, now the Russian Federation and the neighboring states. This fact makes Eastern Christian relations with Europe a significant geographical and cultural reality. Relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and Islam are both of historic and contemporary importance that is often missed in Western policy.[61] Russia's position regarding the contemporary conflict in Syria is not just based upon geopolitical concerns but a desire to protect the

Christian population (approximately 10 percent), which relates to domestic religious concerns. The second largest concentration of Orthodox is in Central-South Eastern Europe: Greece, Romania, Bulgaria, Serbia, Montenegro, and Cyprus.[62] Significant numbers of Orthodox live in Western Europe and the Eastern Mediterranean: Syria and Lebanon, as well as in Africa (300,000), Australia, Canada, and the United States and many millions in the various states of South America, mainly Argentina and Brazil. Whilst the Eastern Orthodox tradition is a global tradition, its center of gravity remains Russia, Eastern Europe, and the Eastern Mediterranean. The reality of Eastern Christianity is often not taken into consideration by Western, and in particular, US policy, which is coming under increasing criticism with regard to the presence and future of Christianity in the Middle East and the position of Ecumenical Patriarchate in modern Turkey, which is gaining a wide purchase in political circles.[63]

However, the relationship between Eastern Christianity and in particular the Orthodox churches is not straightforward. Orthodoxy's engagement with pluralism is one of "discernable ambivalence."[64] In fact, Eastern Christianity and its relation with Europe need to take into consideration several historical experiences: (i) the Byzantine theocratic legacy, (ii), the Ottoman legacy, (iii) the legacy of communism, and (iv) democratization.[65] With the accession to the EU of Cyprus (2004) and of Bulgaria and Romania (2007) the number of Orthodox Christians in the EU has increased from 10 to 40 million. This changes the religious and cultural assumptions of the Christian roots of Europe that have often been linked to Western Christianity in its Catholic and Protestant traditions.

"Orthodox Greece has been a EU member since 1981, and has often been singled out as a special case within the EU. However, the numerically strengthened Orthodox presence in the EU will challenge these assumptions and what will be the contribution of Orthodoxy to the definition of a common European identity, remains to be seen."[66] This new reality brings the EU into conversation with the Russian Orthodox Church, which now has a special permanent mission to the EU.[67] Relations between Europe and the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East and Turkey, will also be influenced by the long historical encounter between Eastern Orthodox Christians in Southeast Europe (in contrast to many Christians in the Western Europe), which have a centuries long historical record of interactions and cohabitation with Muslims and Islam.[68] For Orthodox Europe

Islam constitutes less "the Other" than it does for the West. Eastern Christian Europe is one of the continent's main frontiers with the world of Islam.[69]

Thus, relations among Catholics, Protestants, and Orthodox are a new and significant marker for Christian identity in the emerging Europe. The expansion of Europe eastward means the center of gravity is shifting not only for the continent's political life but also its religious character. In recent times Catholic-Protestant relations in Western Europe have been the key relationship, but this has changed as large states with majority Orthodox populations have become part of the EU, Bulgaria and Romania, which join Greece. Ukraine and Georgia await that possibility in due course. A renewed sense of common roots and shared values will add quality to the ecclesial relationship and to a common Christian reflection on what is Europe. This is an important new context for Eastern and Western Christianity, and very significantly, the enlargement of the EU eastward has meant that for the first time in history both Eastern and Western churches find themselves side by side in a new European "political" framework. This means that in the long term the nature of their relations will be an important marker in the religious identity of the continent. European identity has become or is becoming more plural drawing upon a wider range of modern historical experience that in turn enlarges how the present will help articulate the near future. This in due course might have profound significance for church-state relations in all states that are witnessing a changing plural environment This can mean simple religious diversity as well as the migration of large numbers of Eastern Christians into what was the common jurisdiction by Western churches bodies.

Conclusion

It is not surprising that a debate over the secular and the postsecular should emerge now at a time of rapid and profound social, cultural, and political change that is accompanying the global shift in the balance of power. Religion is going to be an increasingly important part of EU politics and international relations for some time to come. This unexpected reality is bringing up for Europeans haunting, uncomfortable historical questions regarding culture, religion, the sources of European identity, and the way conceptions of European security are influenced by the sources of the European political imagination. What *is* "Europe," what is Europe *for*, what *constitutes* Europe, and

what does its civilization still offer the world? What is the EU, and what is it for? Free trade, open markets, or financial services cannot sustain a culture for at most they are only means to some end. It has been Christianity that for over a thousand years has been the primary means for constituting and sustaining European culture. If Europeans can no longer give a compelling account of European identity—who they are, what their values are, and why they are important for European identity—it will be increasingly difficult for them to give convincing reasons for the *defense* of who they are, what vision they have of the future, and what sets of ideas, values, and beliefs are capable of helping to sustain this vision amid the EU's future challenges. Ultimately, the debate over what is Europe is a crucial dimension of European security. The turn towards the postsecular is the beginning of a recognition that religion is or needs to become a part of the answer to these kinds of questions.

It can be argued that religious actors may have a growing role in cultural diplomacy, and interreligious dialogue in helping to articulate the basis for a new pluralistic and balanced European order as well as global liberal order. Indeed, almost counterintuitively, it may even be the case that the EU's ability to engage more constructively with religious actors in a newly emerging pluralistic Europe will offer the best way for it to engage more constructively globally, and with the social and political forces in a more culturally and religiously pluralistic world order.

Notes

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2. Peter Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1971), 8.
3. Craig Calhoun, Mark Juergensmeyer, and Jonathan Van Antwerpen (eds.), *Rethinking Secularism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011).
4. See Luca Mavelli, *Europe's Encounter with Islam: The Secular and the Postsecular* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2012), particularly Chapter 4.
5. An early exception is N. J. Rengger, "Culture, Society, and Order in World Politics," in John Baylis and N. J. Rengger (eds.), *Dilemmas of World Politics* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 85–103. For Jan Aart Scholte, *International Relations of Social Change* (Buckingham: Open University Press, 1993), religion is epiphenomenal and is *reduced* to religious revivalism and fundamentalism. "I treat notions of the sacred," Scholte says, "as phenomena whose involvement in the processes of social change can be sufficiently accounted for" in *other* concepts—culture, politics, economics, psychology, and ecology (p. 149). See also Jan Aart Scholte, "From Power to Social Change: An Alternative Focus for International Studies," *Review of International Studies*, 19, 1 (1993): 3–22.
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11. Peter Gourevitsch, "Domestic Politics and International Relations," in Walter Carlsnaes, Thomas Risse, and Beth A. Simmons (eds.), *Handbook of International Relations* (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2002), 309–328.
12. Scott M. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion and the Transformation of International Relations* (New York: Palgrave, 2005), 28–37.
13. Brown, *The World of Late Antiquity.*
14. Ramsay MacMullan, "What Difference Did Christianity Make?" *Historia*, 35 (1986): 322–343, in Ramsay MaMullan, *Changes in the Roman Empire* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 142–155.
15. Eva Bellin, "Faith in Politics: New Trends in the Study of Politics and Religion," *World Politics*, 60, 2008): 316; Monica Duffy Toft, Daniel Philpott, and Timothy Samuel Shah, *Gods Century: Resurgent Religion and Global Politics* (New York: Norton, 2011), 8.
16. Brown, *Authority and the Sacred.*
17. Ibid., xi.
18. Arvind-Pal S. Mandair, "Modernity, Religion-Making and the Postsecular," in Markus Dressler and Arvind-Pal S. Mandair (eds.),

Secularism and Religion-Making (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 3–36.

19. Peter Sztompka, *Sociology of Social Change* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1999); Alberto Melucci, *Nomads of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989).
20. Robert Markus begins *The End of Ancient Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) by discussing debates and language familiar to the study of religion in international relations (Section 1 of the book is entitled "The Crisis of Identity," and Chapter 1 is called "Secularity").
21. Ibid., 1–2.
22. What "social practices" can be treated with "indifference" and what ones are "supremely relevant" for religious authenticity? However, are "there any criteria to determine relevance?" If it is the previous religion and not the manner of life, that is, the "secular" customs, that need to be renounced, "where does 'religion' end and 'culture' begin?" Ibid., 6.
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25. Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973), 89.
26. Markus, *The End of Ancient Christianity*, 14–15.
27. Ibid., 2.
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29. Fred Halliday, "Culture and International Relations: A New Reductionism?" in Michi Ebata and Beverly Neufeld (eds.), *Confronting the Political in International Relations* (London: Macmillan, 2000), 47–71.
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33. Philip G. Cerny. *Rethinking World Politics: A Theory of Transnational Neopluralism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010).
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37. See Michael Cox, Nicholas Rengger, Fred Halliday, John Vincent, and the idea of progress in international relations, *International Affairs*, 87, 5 (2011): 1045–1050.
38. Adam Watson, *The Evolution of International Society* (London: Routledge, 1992).
39. Thomas, *The Global Resurgence of Religion*, 21–26, 33, 39, 54–55, 92, 151; Cavanaugh, *The Myth of Religious Violence*, 69–85; Cavanaugh, *Migrations of the Holy: God, State, and the Political Meaning of the Church* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2011).
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57. See the articles by Sebastian Brock (Syrian Orthodox Church), Anthony O'Mahony (Coptic Church), and John Wholley (Armenian Church) in O'Mahony and Loosely (eds.), *Eastern Christianity in the Modern Middle East*.
58. Daniela Kalkandjieva, "A Comparative Analysis on Church-State Relations in Eastern Orthodoxy: Concepts, Models and Principles," *Journal of Church and State*, 53, 4 (2011): 587–614.
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Chapter 7

The Clash of Postsecular Orders in Contemporary Russia

Richard Sakwa

Sometime in the eighteenth century a fundamental shift took place in the European political imagination. Hitherto dreams of emancipation, freedom, and utopia were cast in religious terms, provoking bitter internecine conflict and wars of religion. The emergence of a new social rationalism during the Enlightenment emphasized individual conscience and the profound valorization of independent knowledge. The formal religious element was removed from the public eschatology of progress and development. Henceforth a secularizing dynamic was built into most variants of modernization, to the point that religion was expected to disappear as a significant factor in social life. The Bolshevik Revolution in 1917 combined rationalistic eighteenth-century Enlightenment ideals of humanistic progress with nineteenth-century materialist conceptions of social emancipation, giving rise to the intense and violent espousal of a secular progressivism based not only on the destruction of organized religion, but also on the advancement of new forms of secularized political spirituality.

In 1991 these multiple but entwined projects collapsed, opening up a complex era of political reconstitution in which the appropriate model of the good life remains intensely contested. Russian post-communism is a forward-looking project, but it also demonstrates a powerful remedial aspect, which at its most basic reduces to the countersecular moment of desecularization. The latter is only one facet of contemporary development, and postsecularism is quite compatible with both the restoration of religion into public affairs and